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OLD AMERICAN SILVER

The Museum already possesses a nucleus for a collection of old American silver, the latest acquisition being a small hot water pot and cream jug marked "Coleman."

Mr. John H. Buck, the well-known expert in American metal work, connected with the Metropolitan Museum, New York, has furnished the following information regarding this silversmith:

Nathaniel Coleman, who in the early part of the nineteenth century was a silversmith in Burlington, N. J., learned the "trade of Gould and Silversmith" from James Roe, of Kingston, N. Y., in 1776. He served his apprenticeship for about seven years, and in 1783, at the age of eighteen, he received a commendatory certificate from his employer. He was a member of the religious society of Friends, and married in 1791 Elizabeth Lippincott, a widow. He continued to live in Burlington until his death, which occurred in 1842.



SILVER JUGS Made by Nathaniel Coleman Burlington, N. J., 1819-1832

The pieces of silverware recently secured for the Museum collection bear the name of N. Coleman, impressed. They were both made for the family of the maker, as shown by the inscriptions which are engraved on them. The hot water pot bears the date 12 mo. 22, 1819, while the cream pitcher is dated 7 mo. 12, 1832. The shapes are graceful, but the pieces are entirely devoid of any chasing or other ornamentation.

Other examples of his work, which, on account of his being a member of the society of Friends, was always quite plain, are known, which bear dates as early as 1807, and it is probable that he was established in Burlington even before that time, but the exact date is not known. Neither is it probable that the cream jug dated 1832 was one of the last pieces made by him, so that it is reasonable to suppose that he continued in business until near the end of his life.

Another recent acquisition, in old American silver, is a tall coffee pot of Colonial form, bearing the mark of J. Shoemaker, a Philadelphia silversmith who was in business from about 1796 to 1819.